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REMARKS

Claims 2 to 4 remain in this application.

Claim 4 has been corrected as suggested by the Examiner.

Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 2 and 3 under 35 USC 112 is requested. As illustrated in Fig. 8, the spring clip has a rearward lock 28 that contains an aperture 27 with four points 30 or cutouts that define the aperture 27. The "fingers" referenced by the Examiner are in fact the "cutouts". Each "cutout" extends arcuately between a pair of slits that are spaced apart by 90°. It is respectfully submitted that claims 2 and 3 conform with the specification and drawings and are in conformance with the provisions of 35 USC 112.

Reconsideration of the rejection of claim 2 is being anticipated by Woehr is requested.

First, claim 2 requires a needle guard to have "a plurality of cutouts defining a second aperture receiving said needle". The spaces on either side of the flexible flap 116 shown in Fig. 8 of Woehr do not define an aperture that receives the needle 16. As can be seen in Fig. 7D, the needle passes below the plane of the flap 116 and the apertures defined thereby. That is to say, the needle 16 does not pass through the apertures defined by the flap 116.

Second, claim 2 requires a needle to have an enlarged portion "for passage through said second aperture. . . while flexing said cutouts toward said first lock. . .". Woehr does not describe or teach such a structure. As can be seen in Figs. 7D and 7E, passage of the bulge 61 of the needle 15 by the flap 116 causes the flap 116 to be flexed upwardly and not toward the opening 58.

Thlrd, claim 2 requires that upon withdrawal of the needle from the second lock "said cutouts move inwardly to block a return movement of said needle through said second lock". Woehr is void of any such teaching. Specifically, the flap 116 does not move inwardly to block any return movement of the needle 15.

In view of the above, a rejection of claim 2 as being anticipated by Woehr is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 USC 102.

Claim 3 depends from claim 2 and is believed to be allowable for similar reasons.

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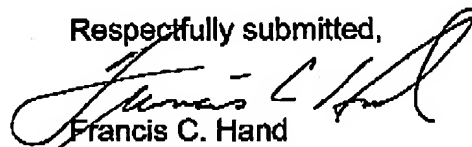
Claim 4, as amended, describes a structure not anticipated by Purdy. More specifically, claim 4 requires "a housing of cylindrical shape removably mounted on said hub. . .". Insofar as can be determined from Figs. 1A and 2 of Purdy, the needle tip cover 16 is not of cylindrical shape and is not mounted on the needle hub 12. Instead, the needle tip cover 16 has a distal end that is positioned within a cylindrical passage 32 of the needle hub 12 and includes a radially extending projection 36 that extends into a slot 34 within the hub 22. In addition, the needle tip cover 16 has a pair of flat surfaces 44 on opposite sides and a radially extending flange 48 as illustrated in Fig. 2.

Further, claim 4 requires "a spring clip of circular shape. . .". As illustrated in each of Figs 6a and 6b, the leaf springs 58 of Purdy are not of circular shape. As noted in applicant's description in page 9, lines 10 to 11, the spring clip may be circular in shape for ease of insertion into the hollow housing. Purdy does not describe or teach such a structure.

In view of the above, a rejection of claim 24 as being anticipated by Purdy is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 USC 102.

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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